

**Pawtucketville Neighborhood Meeting  
Minutes for 8/19/04**

Attendance:

Louisa Varnum  
John Hamblet  
Naomi Prendergast  
John Belanger  
Gerard Frechette  
Bob Mullin  
Keven Staveley  
Amoah Yeboah-Korang  
Dick Sousa  
Joe Boyle  
Helen Lee

Location: D'Youville Manor

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KS: The problem is the noise from traffic not the volume (quantity) of the traffic. But you can decrease noise impact with barriers, trees, draping, and other solutions we should talk about.

JH: Maybe sound-deadening asphalt?

LV: Why are there traffic counters on West Meadow and Varnum?

Joe: The planning board may have asked developers to do a survey.

AY: On previous minutes, edit "planned build-out", "lack of mass transit".

\*\* Minutes from past two meetings were approved.

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Opportunities:

JF: We can address growth issues regarding institutional expansion with Lowell General, UMass, etc. We can work together to bring about good development.

NP: Institutions can provide services to the neighborhood e.g. senior housing, assisted living.

LV: Institutions can provide jobs. Everything we need is here in Pawtucketville. Institutions provide much of that.

Joe: The institutions in Pawtucketville have desirable physical layouts. They are large, leafy, natural places.

AY: University Ave. demonstrates good urban design e.g. the rows of lights are nice to look at in the nighttime. Institutions can provide services such as athletic programs, tutoring, and mentoring programs. Promote volunteerism.

NP: At D'Youville, we had volunteers from the University train our residents in computer skills.

BM: Also the public schools can participate in providing these services. I visited a school that had a very tastefully constructed parking garage for the students. UMass needs more parking, but it should be aesthetically pleasing to the neighborhood. The University students also need better and cleaner housing.

JF: We should encourage the UMass students to walk across the University Ave. bridge instead of driving and parking in Pawtucketville. There is that parking garage that they are building near downtown. There could be a shuttle service from the parking garage to the campus.

AY: The student organizations have been having partnerships with downtown businesses such as discount offers to students to encourage them to go downtown.

JB: The update on the UMass garage is that our contractor went bankrupt and we have no designer yet. We're on hold for now.

KS: We should bank on the jobs and cultural draws that bring people to University Ave. and Mammoth Rd.

JB: These big institutions e.g. UMass and Lowell General are dependable and they are not going away unlike private companies.

KS: We can take advantage of Heritage state park and try to bring smaller scale events there, but not undesirable events like motor boat races.

NP: New development in Pawtucketville gives people opportunities to "move up and not out". Lifetime city. Diversified housing stock. Meet contemporary needs by offering bigger houses.

LV: But not huge houses. They should be of average size like the ones we have now.

NP: I'm not advocating townhouses but they can be choices we offer to people. If people want to downsize e.g. seniors, or upsize e.g. growing families, they should have these options.

AY: We have an opportunity to preserve neighborhood quality of life.

DS: Give choices for people who don't want to leave Pawtucketville like empty-nesters who can't afford or don't want to stay in big houses.

JH: We can take advantage of the history of Pawtucketville and educate people about it and have cultural offerings.

LV: Especially about this area's pre-industrial history.

Joe: Historic preservation can drive good development.

LV: We should identify places that can be protected e.g. publicly owned land.

AY: We should promote owner occupancy.

JF: Through this process, we can define the character of our neighborhood. We can identify districts and match zoning to character.

KS: We can try different traffic calming opportunities e.g. new type of paving on Varnum Ave. We should come up with different solutions for different problems – we should not just put four-way stops to solve all our traffic calming problems.

BM: Educational opportunities. The boat house can be used by residents. Being near the water provides an opportunity to teach children about environmental issues, recycling, how to appreciate wildlife, etc.

JF: BM's comment also applies to vernal pools, the state forest, etc.

JB: Design of new bridge can also provide opportunities e.g. the addition of bike lanes, better pedestrian access, and controlled traffic. We want a better physical design though, not the rubber stamp kind typical of state projects. We want it to represent our neighborhood. We may be able to get more funding b/c it's in a historic district.

LV: Why is canal walk gate always locked?

JB: They're not finished ensuring safety on the canal and they need to complete access from School St.

BM: The bridge can provide an access way to canal walk.

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### Threats:

JF: I like how we have clear and tight business zones. We want to keep businesses separate from neighborhoods.

JH: Businesses starting in homes. How do you prevent the transition from just working at home to running a business with employees, etc.

JB: Design of new bridge can be a threat if it is poorly designed and if it will cause more traffic.

JF: University Ave. bridge may be a threat if it is realigned and brings traffic to Mt. Hope St.

KS: When we used to have rotaries, traffic used to keep flowing without lots of stops.

Joe: We do need better bridge crossings and at the same time minimize traffic on them. Rotaries are not friendly towards pedestrians.

NP: Growth in population and an influx of people can be a threat. It can make jobs here more competitive.

AY: Population growth can strain our infrastructure. Established families may want to move out due to increased population.

DS: Institutional expansion is a threat if it means inappropriate land uses and bad aesthetics.

LV: "Developable" land is a threat if not conserved. Maybe we shouldn't call it that like in the Master Plan.

JH: Enhanced access via bridges and roads can create more traffic problems.

AY: What does it mean in the Master Plan when it talks about a better crossing in Tyngsboro?

Joe: It's talking about the bridge they're building that is supported by NMCOG.

KS: Rising real estate prices are a threat.

JF: Tear-downs are a threat.

JH: Gentrification of the city can be a threat.

LV: In Lexington, they require percentages of open space.

NP: Houses with huge additions are also bad.

BM: Strip malls that are poorly designed are a threat.

LV: Petitions to expand business districts are a threat.

KS: But in Branch/Middlesex, petitions have worked out well. It's a well-working business district.

JF: The hydroplant is a threat. We should invite those people to attend our meetings. Floods caused by the hydroplant can affect property values.